

## ANNOUNCEMENT OF FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **Federal Agency Name:** Economic Development Administration (EDA), Department of Commerce
- **Federal Funding Opportunity Title:** National Technical Assistance
- **Announcement Type:** Federal Funding Opportunity (FFO) Announcement
- **Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number:** 11.303, Economic Development—Technical Assistance
- **Dates:** Applications for funding under this program must be received by the EDA representative listed in section VII. of this competitive solicitation no later than August 1, 2006 at 5:00 p.m. EDT. Applications received after 5:00 p.m. EDT on August 1, 2006 will not be considered for funding. By September 1, 2006, EDA expects to notify the applicants selected for investment assistance. The selected applicants should expect to receive funding for their projects within thirty (30) days of EDA's notification of selection.
- **Application Submission:** Applications must be submitted to EDA Headquarters in Washington, D.C., as provided in section VII.B. of this competitive solicitation.
- **Funding Opportunity Description:** Pursuant to the National Technical Assistance program, EDA is soliciting applications for the following technical assistance projects:
  1. Information dissemination to practitioners serving economically distressed areas;  
and
  2. Six regional symposia.

## **FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT**

### **I. Funding Opportunity Description**

#### **A. Program Objective**

The Economic Development Administration's (EDA) mission is to lead the federal economic development agenda by promoting innovation and competitiveness, preparing American regions for growth and success in the worldwide economy. Through its National Technical Assistance program (NTA Program), EDA works towards fulfilling its mission by funding research and technical assistance projects to promote competitiveness and innovation in distressed urban and rural regions throughout the United States and its territories. By working in conjunction with its research partners, EDA will help States, local governments and community-based organizations to achieve their highest economic potential.

#### **B. Project Description**

EDA is soliciting applications to provide technical assistance in connection with the following projects: (1) information dissemination to practitioners serving economically distressed areas and (2) six regional symposia. Applicants may submit applications for either of these two projects individually or collectively. As described in detail below, the information dissemination project has three components: broadcasting of strategy telecasts; preparation and dissemination of monthly electronic newsletters; and preparation and dissemination of a quarterly magazine. Applications must address each of these three (3) components of the information dissemination project.

#### **1. Project Title: Information Dissemination to Practitioners Serving Distressed Areas**

##### **Background Statement:**

As part of its ongoing mission to assist economically distressed areas, EDA supports the dissemination of information to economic development practitioners serving distressed regions. EDA's intent is to implement a coordinated and complementary information dissemination program that, through strategic linkages, reaches the maximum number of economic development practitioners.

EDA is soliciting applications to carry out three (3) separate tasks that will continue its mission of serving the economic development needs of distressed rural and urban regions. This project will require the recipient to leverage new technologies for information dissemination (including use of the Internet, audio/videoconferencing, e-mail, etc.), and to use these technologies to identify opportunities and provide information in new or emerging areas of economic development needed by practitioners. The project will include a variety of media, as described below in the proposed scopes of work. Applications must address all three (3) tasks described below.

## **Deliverables:**

The deliverables for each task are as follows:

- **Task 1 – Strategy Telecasts**

Conduct six satellite economic development strategy telecasts targeted to practitioners nationwide. This includes selecting the topics, presenters or panelists and case studies for each broadcast, subject to EDA's concurrence; arranging for the moderator and facilities to conduct each telecast; undertaking sufficient publicity that ensures the maximum audience is reached; ensuring that sufficient local download facilities are available; and providing for a feedback mechanism that measures both the level of participation in, and the effectiveness of, the broadcasts. Each telecast must be recorded digitally so that it can be made available and be viewable broadly on Internet distribution channels, including on EDA's and other Internet websites.

**Completion Deadlines:** The telecasts will take place at intervals during the year between October 1, 2006 and October 1, 2007, as determined in conjunction with EDA.

- **Task 2 – Monthly Electronic Newsletters**

Prepare and disseminate a monthly electronic newsletter with information targeted to a national audience of economic development practitioners. The newsletter must be in hypertext markup language (html) and in an attractive and colorful format, but must also be available as a plain text document for those who cannot access it in html. The newsletter will ordinarily (i) be no more than two (2) pages in length; (ii) cover three or four topics each month; and (iii) include summaries of critical information, subject to EDA's concurrence. Where appropriate, the newsletter will serve as a roadmap to other information resources through hot links that facilitate direct access to more in-depth information. The newsletter will be distributed at no cost to organizations and individuals working to improve the economic viability of distressed areas. The dissemination effort includes developing an inclusive e-mail distribution list, which will also be made available to EDA for its use. The e-mail distribution list may involve supplementing and/or combining existing lists that economic development organizations currently possess, in order to achieve maximum target audience penetration as quickly as possible.

**Completion Deadlines:** The electronic newsletter will be disseminated each month between October 1, 2006 and October 1, 2007.

- **Task 3 – Quarterly Magazine**

Prepare a quarterly magazine of approximately 20-40 pages in a four-color, high-quality format that will provide in-depth information to practitioners on a range of timely topics consistent with EDA's mission and subject to EDA's concurrence. The magazine will cover subjects such as current administration policy, interviews with key decision-makers and practitioners, and present and analyze best practice case studies in economic development. EDA expects that this magazine will be mailed in hard copy to up to 6,000 (depending on costs)

recipients. The mailing list will also be made available to EDA for its use. In addition to the hard copy dissemination, an html counterpart will be made available for posting on EDA's website at [www.eda.gov](http://www.eda.gov).

**Completion Deadlines:** The quarterly magazines will be published at the end of each quarter during FY 2007 (December 31; March 31; June 30; September 30).

## **2. Project Title: Six Regional Symposia**

### **Background Statement:**

EDA is soliciting applications from national organizations to partner with EDA to organize, support, promote and hold a series of six one-day Regional Economic Development Roundtable Meetings at six (6) separate locations across the United States (to be determined by EDA) between the dates of October 1, 2006 and October 1, 2007. The purpose of the Roundtable Meetings will be to provide regional forums for private and public sector leaders to deliberate on cluster-based regional economic development strategies, and policies and best practices for creating jobs and economic opportunity in a 21st century economy. At the conclusion of the Roundtable Meetings, the recipient will document and share with the national economic development community the strategies, policies and best practices. Applications must address all deliverables described below.

### **Deliverables:**

- Researching and identifying the most appropriate meeting locations within the geographic areas selected by EDA. There will be no registration fees collected for Roundtable Meeting participation, and no meals provided to participants. Therefore, meeting locations must accommodate the opportunity for participants to secure meals at their own expense.
- Recruiting private and public sector speakers from local communities in the selected geographic areas, and organizing these speakers into panels to support productive discussions on cutting-edge, cluster-based regional economic development.
- Securing the participation of 200 to 300 attendees from the regional economic development community per Roundtable Meeting through successful marketing and promotion.
- Securing regional and local media coverage of each Roundtable Meeting, including daily and community newspapers, radio and television coverage.
- Submitting to EDA a written synopsis of key ideas, best practices and policies discussed at each Roundtable Meeting.
- Delivering weekly progress updates to EDA, and providing for regular liaison with EDA.

### **C. Program Authority**

The authority for the NTA Program is section 207 of the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. § 3147), as amended (PWEDA), and 13 C.F.R. part 306,

subpart A. Additional information is available at EDA's Internet website at [www.eda.gov](http://www.eda.gov) and in section VI. of this announcement.

## **II. Award Information**

### **A. Funding Availability**

EDA may use funds appropriated under the Science, State, Justice, Commerce and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2006 (Pub. L. No. 109-108, 119 Stat. 2290 (2005)) to make awards under the NTA Program authorized by PWEDA. Approximately \$700,000 is available, and shall remain available until expended, for funding awards pursuant to this competitive solicitation. EDA anticipates publishing additional FFO announcements under the NTA Program later during this fiscal year.

### **B. Type of Funding Instrument**

Awards under this competitive solicitation will be in the form of grants or cooperative agreements, with cooperative agreements being used where there is substantial collaboration between EDA's NTA Program staff and the recipient of an award. For example, a cooperative agreement will be used if there is substantial collaboration between EDA's NTA Program staff and the recipient of an information dissemination award in the selection of topics and presenters for satellite telecasts and regional policy forums.

## **III. Eligibility Information**

### **A. Eligible Applicants and Eligible Recipients**

Pursuant to PWEDA, eligible applicants for and eligible recipients of EDA investment assistance include a District Organization; an Indian Tribe or a consortium of Indian Tribes; a State; a city or other political subdivision of a State, including a special purpose unit of a State or local government engaged in economic or infrastructure development activities, or a consortium of political subdivisions; an institution of higher education or a consortium of institutions of higher education; a public or private non-profit organization or association; a private individual; or a for-profit organization. *See* section 3 of PWEDA (42 U.S.C. § 3122) and 13 C.F.R. § 300.3.

### **B. Cost Sharing or Matching Share Requirement**

Generally, the amount of the EDA grant may not exceed fifty (50) percent of the total cost of the project. Projects may receive an additional amount that shall not exceed thirty (30) percent, based on the relative needs of the region in which the project will be located, as determined by EDA. *See* section 204(a) of PWEDA (42 U.S.C. § 3144) and 13 C.F.R. § 301.4(b)(1). The Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development (Assistant Secretary) has the discretion to establish a maximum EDA investment rate of up to one hundred (100) percent where the project (i) merits and is not otherwise feasible without an increase to the EDA investment rate; or (ii) will be of no or only incidental benefit to the recipient. *See* section 204(c)(3) of PWEDA (42 U.S.C. § 3144) and 13 C.F.R. § 301.4(b)(4).

While cash contributions are preferred, in-kind contributions, consisting of assumptions of debt or contributions of space, equipment and services, may provide the non-federal share requirement of the total project cost. *See* section 204(b) of PWEDA (42 U.S.C. § 3144). EDA will fairly evaluate all in-kind contributions, which must be eligible project costs and meet applicable federal cost principles and uniform administrative requirements. Funds from other federal financial assistance awards are considered matching share funds only if authorized by statute that allows such use, which may be determined by EDA's reasonable interpretation of the statute. *See* 13 C.F.R. § 300.3. The applicant must show that the matching share is committed to the project, available as needed and not conditioned or encumbered in any way that precludes its use consistent with the requirements of EDA investment assistance. *See* 13 C.F.R. § 301.5.

#### **IV. Application and Submission Information**

##### **A. Address to Request Application**

Paper copies of the Form ED-900A, "Application for Investment Assistance" (OMB Control No. 0610-0094), may be obtained from EDA's Internet website at [www.eda.gov](http://www.eda.gov) or by contacting the EDA representative listed in section VII. of this announcement.

##### **B. Content and Form of Application Process**

To apply for an award under this competitive solicitation, an eligible applicant must submit a completed Application for Investment Assistance (Form ED-900A) in accordance with the guidelines set forth below.

##### **1. Application Format**

Each Application for Investment Assistance must include:

- a. A completed Form ED-900A, including the program-specific component related to EDA's National Technical Assistance, Training, and Research and Evaluation investments;
- b. A description of how the applicant intends to carry out the scope of work (included in the narrative requested in Part I of the program-specific component, which narrative should not exceed ten (10) pages);
- c. A proposed budget and accompanying explanation, including a detailed explanation of the matching share (i.e., non-federal share) to be contributed by the applicant's regional/local partners (as requested in Part II of the program-specific component as Exhibit II.A.);
- d. Resumes/qualifications of key staff (which should not exceed two (2) pages per individual, with an additional two (2) pages allowed for a single summary description of all organizations or consultants named in the application); and
- e. A proposed schedule for completion of the project.

## 2. Submission Deadline

Applications for funding under this competitive solicitation must be received by the EDA representative listed in section VII.B. no later than August 1, 2006 at 5:00 p.m. EDT. Applications received after 5:00 p.m. EDT on August 1, 2006 will be considered non-responsive and will not be considered for funding. By September 1, 2006, EDA expects to notify the applicants selected for investment assistance.

## C. Intergovernmental Review

Applications for funding under this competitive solicitation are not subject to the requirements of Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs."

## D. Other Submission Requirements

Applicants may submit applications by e-mail, hand-delivery or postal mail, as provided in section VII.B. of this announcement.

# **V. Application Review Information**

## A. Evaluation Criteria and Selection Procedures

To apply for an award under this competitive solicitation, an eligible applicant must submit a completed application (Form ED-900A) to EDA during the timeframe specified and in the manner provided in sections IV.B. and VII.B. Applications that do not meet all items required or that exceed the page limitations set forth in section IV.B of this announcement will be considered non-responsive and will not be considered by the review panel. Applications that meet all the requirements will be evaluated by a review panel comprised of at least three (3) EDA staff members, all of whom will be full-time federal employees. The review panel will evaluate the applications and rate and rank them using the following criteria of approximate equal weight:

1. Conformance with EDA's statutory and regulatory requirements, including the extent to which the proposed project satisfies the award requirements set out below and as provided in 13 C.F.R. § 306.2:
  - a. Strengthens the capacity of local, State or national organizations and institutions to undertake and promote effective economic development programs targeted to regions of distress;
  - b. Benefits distressed regions; and
  - c. Demonstrates innovative approaches to stimulate economic development in distressed regions;
2. The degree to which an EDA investment will have strong organizational leadership, relevant project management experience and a significant commitment of human resources talent to ensure the project's successful execution (*see* 13 C.F.R. § 301.8(b));

3. The ability of the applicant to implement the proposed project successfully (*see* 13 C.F.R. § 301.8);
4. The feasibility of the budget presented; and
5. The cost to the Federal government.

#### B. Selection Factors

EDA expects to fund the highest ranking applications submitted under this competitive solicitation. The Assistant Secretary is the Selecting Official and will normally follow the recommendation of the review panel. However, the Assistant Secretary may not make any selection, or he may select an application out of rank order for the following reasons:

1. A determination that the application better meets the overall objectives of sections 2 and 207 of PWEDA (42 U.S.C. §§ 3121 and 3147);
2. The applicant's performance under previous awards; or
3. The availability of funding.

### **VI. Award Administration Information**

#### A. Award Notices

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by postal mail that their applications were not recommended for funding.

The Selecting Official will issue the grant award (Form CD-450), which is the authorizing financial assistance award document. By signing the Form CD-450, the recipient agrees to comply with all award provisions. It is provided by postal mail to the appropriate business office of the recipient's organization and must be signed and returned without modification by the recipient within thirty (30) days of receipt.

#### B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Administrative and national policy requirements for all Department of Commerce awards are contained in the Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements, published in the Federal Register on December 30, 2004 (69 FR 78389). This notice may be accessed by entering the Federal Register volume and page number provided in the previous sentence at the following Internet website:  
<http://gpoaccess.gov/fr/retrieve.html>.

#### C. Reporting Requirements

All recipients are required to submit financial and performance (technical) reports. All financial reports must be submitted in triplicate (one original and two copies) to the EDA Program Officer. Reports are due on a semi-annual schedule and must be submitted no later than thirty (30) days following the end of the six-month period(s) established in the award. Final reports are due ninety (90) days after the award completion. *See* 13 C.F.R. § 302.16.

#### D. EDA's Regulations

On August 11, 2005, EDA published an interim final rule (70 FR 47002) to reflect the amendments made to PWEDA by the Economic Development Administration Reauthorization Act of 2004 (Pub. L. No. 108-373, 118 Stat. 1756 (2004)). With limited exceptions, the interim final rule became effective on October 1, 2005. On December 15, 2005, EDA published a second interim final rule in the Federal Register (70 FR 74193) to change provisions of the August 11, 2005 interim final rule consistent with the direction provided in the Conference Report (H.R. Conf. Rep. No. 109-272) accompanying the Science, State, Justice, Commerce and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2006 (Pub. L. No. 109-108, 119 Stat. 2290 (2005)).

EDA's regulations codified at 13 C.F.R. Chapter III will govern an award made under this announcement.

### **VII. Agency Contacts**

#### A. Additional Information

EDA's Internet website at [www.eda.gov](http://www.eda.gov) contains additional information on EDA and its programs. For additional information on the NTA Program, please contact William P. Kittredge at (202) 482-5442.

#### B. Address for Application Submissions

Applications submitted pursuant to this competitive solicitation may be:

1. E-mailed to William P. Kittredge at [wkittredge@eda.doc.gov](mailto:wkittredge@eda.doc.gov); or
2. Hand-delivered to William P. Kittredge, Senior Program Analyst, Economic Development Administration, Room 7009, U.S. Department of Commerce, 1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20230; or
3. Mailed to William P. Kittredge, Senior Program Analyst, Economic Development Administration, Room 7009, U.S. Department of Commerce, 1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20230.

Applicants are encouraged to submit applications by e-mail. Applicants are advised that, due to mail security measures, EDA's receipt of mail sent via the United States Postal Service may be substantially delayed or suspended in delivery. EDA will not accept applications submitted by facsimile.

### **VIII. Other Information and Requirements**

EDA's currently effective regulations and PWEDA are available on its Internet website at [www.eda.gov](http://www.eda.gov). Certain EDA, Department of Commerce, and other application requirements are noted below.

- A. Projects are expected to be completed in a timely manner consistent with the nature of the project. The completion deadline for each project is specified under section I. of this announcement.
- B. Awards may include a requirement that the successful applicant(s) conduct briefings and/or training workshops for individuals and organizations interested in the project results. The completion dates set forth above are only for completion of the project and submission of the written report. Any required briefings/workshops will take place no later than one year after submission of the final report. Locations and dates of the briefings/workshops are at EDA's sole discretion. Usually these consist of at least one briefing in Washington, D.C., with the other briefings/workshops held in conjunction with one or more of EDA's regional conferences.
- C. If an application is selected for funding, EDA has no obligation to provide any additional future funding in connection with an award. Renewal of an award to increase funding or extend the period of performance is at EDA's sole discretion.
- D. EDA is committed to a policy of non-discrimination in the administration of all its programs.